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PRESIDENT SUGGESTS INTERIM FORMULA FOR EUROPE

THE current discussion about this country's policy toward Europe has been officially brought into the open by President Roosevelt's message to Congress on January 6. The mere fact that thousands of Americans are fighting on European soil offers convincing proof that our security is linked to a continent brought close to our shores by long-range bombers, robot bombs, and the practicability of overseas invasion we ourselves demonstrated on D-day. But many people who recognize our direct concern with the military situation in Europe still see no reason why the United States should take any responsibility for the political and economic consequences of the Allies' combined military operations; yet at the same time feel free to admonish Britain or Russia for doing so.

END OF "HANDS-OFF" POLICY? The "hands-off" policy which was expressed in Mr. Stettinius' statement of December 5 on Greece and Italy, however, appears on the point of being qualified, if not yet abandoned. "We shall not hesitate to use our influence—and to use it now," said President Roosevelt, "to secure so far as is humanly possible the fulfillment of the principles of the Atlantic Charter. We have not shrunk from the military responsibilities brought on by this war. We cannot and will not shrink from the political responsibilities which follow in the wake of battle." If this proposed course, which is the very opposite of the hands-off policy, is consistently followed, the United States will at last step off the pedestal of toplofty, self-assured idealism from which it has often addressed the world in the past into what an English periodical has described as "the dust of the arena." In the political sphere, as on the field of battle, we shall have to be prepared not only for advances and victories, but also for withdrawals and setbacks. We have expressed over and over again the highest ideals in international relations. But ideals that are not put to work are like

idle capital: they bring no benefit to any one. What we need, above all, is to relate the use of our military and economic power, greatly enhanced in the course of the war, to the political ideals we profess.

U.S. TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES. In this spirit of practical politics rather than intransigent idealism, the President approached the much-controverted question of how liberated nations, many of whose citizens are prisoners of war or forced laborers in Germany, can democratically choose their governments in accordance with the Atlantic Charter while the war is still in progress. During this interim period—which may be considerably prolonged as a result of the German counteroffensive in the West—the President said: "We and our Allies have a duty which we cannot ignore to use our influence to the end that no temporary or provisional authorities in the liberated countries block the eventual exercise of the people's right freely to choose the government and institutions under which, as free men, they are to live."

This formula would require a firm and lasting guarantee by the United States if it is to reassure and pacify those groups in Greece, for example, which fear that the British government is still intent on restoring some form of Rightist régime, even though shorn of the King; or those Poles in whose opinion the Lublin Committee, recognized by Moscow on January 5 as the Provisional Government of Poland, is an interloper Quisling régime. Whatever guarantees the United States may decide to give on this point should be made within the framework of the United Nations organization proposed at Dumbarton Oaks. For it is obvious that this country by its own unilateral action cannot achieve its objectives in Europe. It will have to enlist the voluntary collaboration of Britain, Russia and the liberated countries if the interim program proposed by President Roosevelt is to be carried out. And the very necessity

of long-term collaboration with other nations will make it necessary for us to accept political responsibilities beyond the interim period.

POLISH BORDER ISSUE. The same thing would be true of proposed frontier readjustments. Secretary of State Stettinius indicated this in his statement of December 18 on Poland, when he said concerning the Russo-Polish frontier that, "if a mutual agreement is reached by the United Nations directly concerned, this Government would have no objection to such an agreement." Shortly after, C. L. Sulzberger—in a detailed dispatch to the *New York Times* from Cairo which purported to sum up State Department views on a number of controversial boundary questions in Europe—declared that the United States hoped that, as a result of negotiations between Russia and Poland, the frontier between the two countries would be fixed at the Curzon Line (which, it will be recalled, was proposed by the Soviet government in January 1944). This statement has not been officially confirmed, but neither has it been denied. If it should prove true that the United States government is not opposed to the Curzon Line, then it may well be asked whether much of the fruitless controversy between Russia and the Polish government-in-exile during the past year might not have been averted by earlier clarification of American

policy on this point.

Much has been said by the American press about the unilateral character of Russia's decisions on Poland. But if one bears in mind the fact that Russia has the physical power to impose any decision it may choose on Poland, which it alone can liberate; one can see that Moscow has not remained unaffected by the questioning attitude of the United States. This country is in a position to exercise a constructive influence on the decisions now being forged in the heat of battle. It is in our direct interest that these decisions should produce neither a continent divided between Britain and Russia, one of whom would sooner or later seek the support of Germany; nor a coalition of Rightist régimes intended to counterbalance Russia, with the indirect approval of the Vatican. Thoughtful Europeans realize that Britain alone will not be able to give them security after the war; and at the same time they have no desire to become mere yes-men for Russia. This is our opportunity to press with utmost vigor for the establishment of the United Nations organization and, in the meantime, for an Interim Council to consider the problems of Europe which for us are no longer academic questions but national responsibilities.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

U.S. ILLUSION OF SECURITY AT ROOT OF ANGLO-AMERICAN TENSION

At a moment when bitter attacks on the United States by large sections of the British press made it appear that Anglo-American relations had reached their lowest point during the war, President Roosevelt and Marshal Montgomery intervened to relieve the tension. Injecting a note of sound good sense into the discussion of inter-Allied differences, the President pointed out in his annual message to Congress that nations, like individuals, do not always think alike. And the Allies' disagreements, he said, must not obscure their "more important common and continued interests in winning the war and building the peace." In a similar tone Marshal Montgomery told his press conference on January 7 of his high regard for American soldiers and his efforts to identify himself so completely with the Americans under his command on the western front that he would not offend them in any way. When one recalls the care Allied generals in World War I felt obliged to exercise in keeping the various national armies strictly separate, Montgomery's attitude marks a definite advance toward Anglo-American unity on a practical plane.

DIFFERENT WARTIME EXPERIENCES. Although the recent British outbursts against the United States for its alleged misunderstanding of Britain's policies in Europe have had their purely negative aspects, they may yet serve a constructive

purpose if they help Americans realize how differently the war has affected Britain and this country. For the British people the war has spelled, more than anything else, almost constant physical danger. While V-1's and V-2's are still holding a large part of the British population in the grip of fear, Americans at home have been relieved not only of actual danger but even of the inconveniences of blackouts and air-raid drills.

To survive, Britain has been forced to use practically all its manpower for strictly military and war-production purposes, and the nation has spent most of its savings, and resources in financing the great struggle. The United States, on the other hand, with its larger population and incomparably greater resources, has enjoyed a consumers' boom and a period of tremendous industrial expansion while turning out enormous quantities of war materials. Under the circumstances, the British would be more than human if they did not feel their relatively greater sacrifices reveal moral superiority and entitle them to certain post-war trade advantages needed to speed their recovery. But it must also be admitted that Americans would be superhuman if they accepted the drastic reductions in civilian standards of living that characterize wartime Britain, for it is obviously necessity rather than virtue that has shaped the war efforts of the two nations.

TESTED FORMS OF SECURITY. The greater economic power and security from attack that Americans enjoy have fostered not only a sense of remoteness from the war but a certain detachment toward the problem of achieving the future peace that the British view with extreme impatience. It is no mere historical accident that the two leaders most closely associated with the League of Nations in 1919 and the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944 were American Presidents, for the United States finds itself under less pressure than either Britain or Russia to adhere to the traditional means of maintaining security. This does not mean that the British regard international organization as any less desirable than do Americans. But Britishers today do not find it easy to give up tested forms of security based on alliances and spheres of influence, even though they realize these methods have frequently failed, for an international organization that is as yet only a paper plan. As a nation Britain will emerge from the war "broke," as Ernest Bevin has bluntly stated, faced by the prospect of competition with American businessmen at a heavy initial disadvantage, and weak in political and diplomatic strength as compared with its two major allies. The British naturally feel, therefore, that they can take no chances of losing what economic and political power they manage to salvage from the war, but must reckon with the possibility that the new Security Council may fail to materialize. That is why they seek to construct a friendly western European bloc and maintain the lifelines of the Empire.

BRITAIN A PART OF EUROPE. Britain's feelings on the subject of post-war security vividly recall France's attitude in 1919, when French spokesmen demanded territorial and military guarantees from their allies as insurance against the possible failure of the League of Nations. In words strikingly similar to those British writers have recently addressed to Americans, French delegates to the Peace Conference declared that the British did not under-

stand France's security needs because the Channel separated England from the continent and gave the British a form of protection France did not enjoy. Today, Britain finds itself almost as much a part of Europe as France, due to the fact that powerful armies have now successfully crossed the Channel in the face of strong defenses. Americans, however, still share the illusion of physical security that Britain had at the close of World War I. And although the Atlantic would probably offer us little more protection in a war twenty-five years hence than the Channel does to the British under present conditions of warfare, many Americans now tend to regard Britain's emphasis on security with the same lack of sympathy that the British displayed toward France in 1919.

STRATEGY CALLED INTO QUESTION. Less understandable than Britain's hesitation in rejecting the "old diplomacy" for a virtually untried "new diplomacy," are the charges the British press has been hurling at the grand strategy of the war. On January 5 *The Economist* continued its criticisms of the United States by declaring that the time had come for Britain to serve notice that full-scale war against Japan must wait until Germany is defeated. By calling into question the Anglo-American decision to direct heavy blows at the Japanese while conducting a full-scale invasion of Europe, *The Economist* clearly overlooked both the need to prevent Japan from further exploiting the great resources of its conquests and the military and political necessity of keeping China in the war. That a careful British observer should have reached these conclusions is all the more surprising in view of the probability that Japan, if unchecked, might have invaded India successfully and dug in more deeply in Burma and Malaya. After five years of danger from the Nazis, however, the British had a natural need to release their pent-up emotions, especially since many sections of American opinion have freely and continuously censured Britain.

WINIFRED N. HADSEL

JUST PUBLISHED—

CHINA AS A POST-WAR MARKET

by Lawrence K. Rosinger

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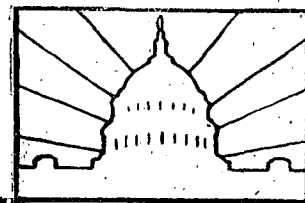
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Washington News Letter



PRESIDENT SEEKS SENATE BACKING ON SECURITY TREATY

The impression here is that a period of cautious political steering in foreign affairs lies ahead for the United States. The main objective of President Roosevelt is the early establishment of an international organization to maintain the peace. To achieve that goal he proposes to refrain from official steps that would aggravate differences between the Allies, and to persuade this country that it would be folly to let disillusionment over divergences between the Allies cause us to reject international co-operation. The possibility of another war is too great a price to pay for unwillingness to associate ourselves with other powers.

WIN THE SENATE, ROOSEVELT'S AIM. This is the course on which the President embarked on January 6, when he sent to Congress his annual message on the state of the union. "We must be on our guard not to exploit and exaggerate the differences between us and our allies, particularly with reference to the peoples who have been liberated from the fascist tyranny," he said. "Perfectionism, no less than isolationism or imperialism or power politics, may obstruct the paths to international peace"; whereas international machinery "can rectify mistakes which may be made," but only if international machinery exists.

To search for a common ground of policy among the major Allies, President Roosevelt intends to meet sometime after Inauguration Day, January 20, with Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin. The next step toward the goal of an international organization is the convening of a United Nations conference to embody the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in a definitive charter. The third step, so far as the United States is concerned, is submission of the charter as a treaty to the Senate. It is of paramount importance to keep two-thirds of the Senate friendly toward international organization to assure acceptance of that treaty. All strategy in foreign relations is planned at the White House with this in mind.

This domestic political problem explains the vagueness of the foreign policy section of the President's message. "We cannot and will not shrink from the political responsibilities which follow in the wake of battle," he said, but did not indicate whether "wake of battle" meant today or after the war, and he said nothing respecting the establish-

ment of an interim United Nations political council to deal with current political responsibilities behind the battle lines.

"We shall not hesitate to use our influence—and to use it now—to secure so far as is humanly possible the fulfillment of the principles of the Atlantic Charter," he said, but did not refer to the fact that the United States government has been using its influence in behalf of the Atlantic Charter principles all along. However, the sentiments he expressed are bound to be pleasing to the American people and cannot hurt him with the Senate.

THREE POINTS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY.

Mr. Roosevelt considers it wise to use this strategy of vagueness and caution since the broad outline of post-war United States foreign policy has been drawn, and an active political policy now might only disturb the outline. That future foreign policy has three facets: international security cooperation; acceptance of the political responsibilities resulting from our military operations, at least during an undefined interim period; and economic expansionism under the banner of "the greatest possible freedom of trade and commerce."

While the President said that the United States and its Allies intend "to respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live and to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them," he added that, "until conditions permit a genuine expression of the peoples' will," the Allies have the duty to see that no provisional régimes block the popular right eventually to choose a government.

The policy of economic expansionism hinted at by President Roosevelt in the state of the union message may cause concern to Britain, whose recent outburst of press criticism of the United States reflected anxiety lest this country pursue policies which would cost the British their important place in world economic life—a place based on empire, shipping, banking and raw materials trade cartels. On January 6 President Roosevelt stressed anew his antipathy to restrictive cartels, saying: "We are opposed to restrictions, whether by public act or private arrangements, which distort and impair commerce, transit and trade."

BLAIR BOLLES

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